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## YEAR 2018 MAINE CONFERENCE UCC FELLOWSHIP DUES

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November, 16, 2017

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- A. **FELLOWSHIP DUES POLICY.** According to Maine Conference fellowship dues policy, the Conference increases/decreases its budgeted annual fellowship dues rate according to a COLA. This Conference policy pegs the fellowship dues rate to the Social Security Administration’s most recent automatic COLA. The actual COLA driven dues rate adjustment, plus any addition to the dues rate approved at the Annual Meeting, becomes the Maine Conference fellowship dues rate for the ensuing calendar year. In this case, calendar year 2018.
- B. **BUDGETED DUES RATE VS. ACTUAL DUES RATE.** Readers of the 2018 Conference Budget recall that the estimated cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for the dues rate was about **2%**. The variables are now in place for an actual Conference fellowship dues rate for the ensuing calendar year. Because the Social Security Administration has published<sup>1</sup> a COLA of **2%<sup>2</sup>**, the 2017 fellowship dues rate will increase by **30 cents**, from \$15.13 per member to \$15.43 per member in calendar year 2018. See **Figure 1** below.

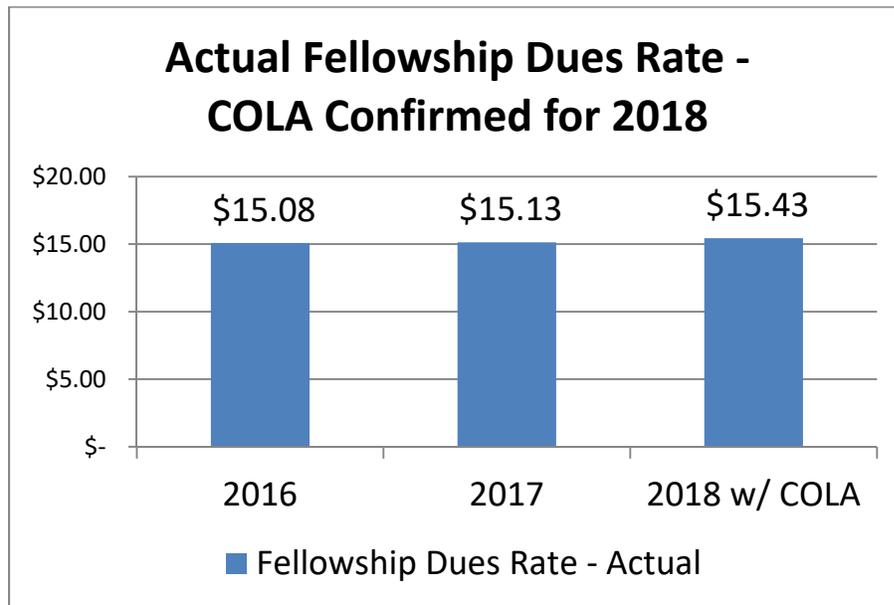


Figure 1

- C. **BUDGETED 2018 FELLOWSHIP DUES INCOME.** The Social Security Administration computed and set a **COLA of 2.0%** - the same as the Conference’s 2.0% estimated COLA for the 2018 budget. Note that the COLA went from 0.3% to 2.0%, accelerating between 2017 and 2018 as shown in **Figure 2** below.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/COLA/colasummary.html>. “Cost-Of-Living Adjustment (COLA).” Cited November 1, 2017. As measured by the year-over-year change in the 3rd quarter’s Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), calculation of 2018 COLA from the Social Security Administration is as follows:  $(239.668 - 235.057) / 235.057 \times 100 = 2.0$  percent. COLA data (<https://www.ssa.gov/news/cola/>).

<sup>2</sup> For more details on the CPI-W, please see: <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/#news>. October 13, 2017.

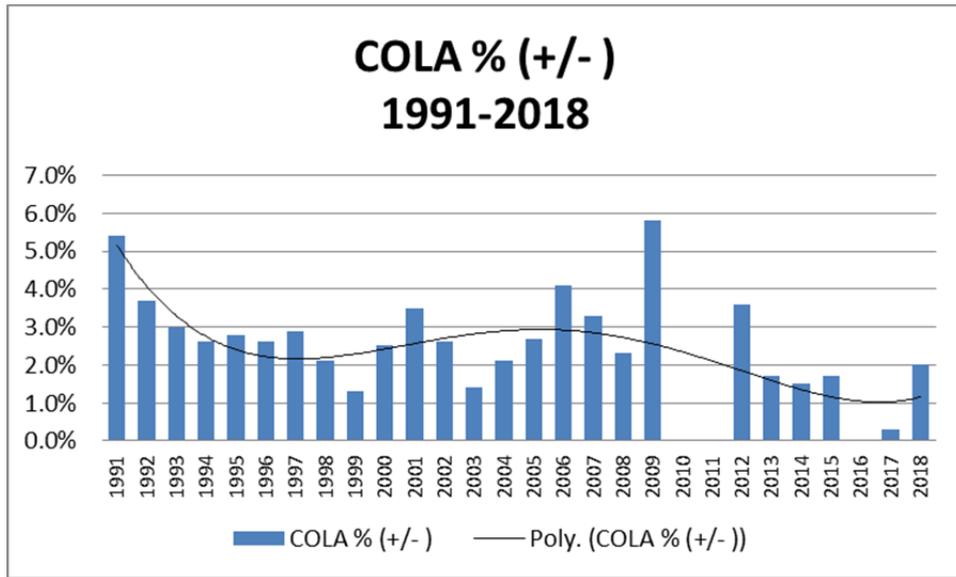


Figure 2 (see note 3 below for interpretation)<sup>3</sup>

While the estimated 2018 budget COLA and the actual 2018 COLA are the same in the short run, there continues to be a long-term decline in the number of members in the Maine Conference UCC. See **Figure 3** below. Because *members are the primary driver for dues income, the risk of declining membership will continue to be a factor in meeting the budget goal of \$227,174 in 2018.*

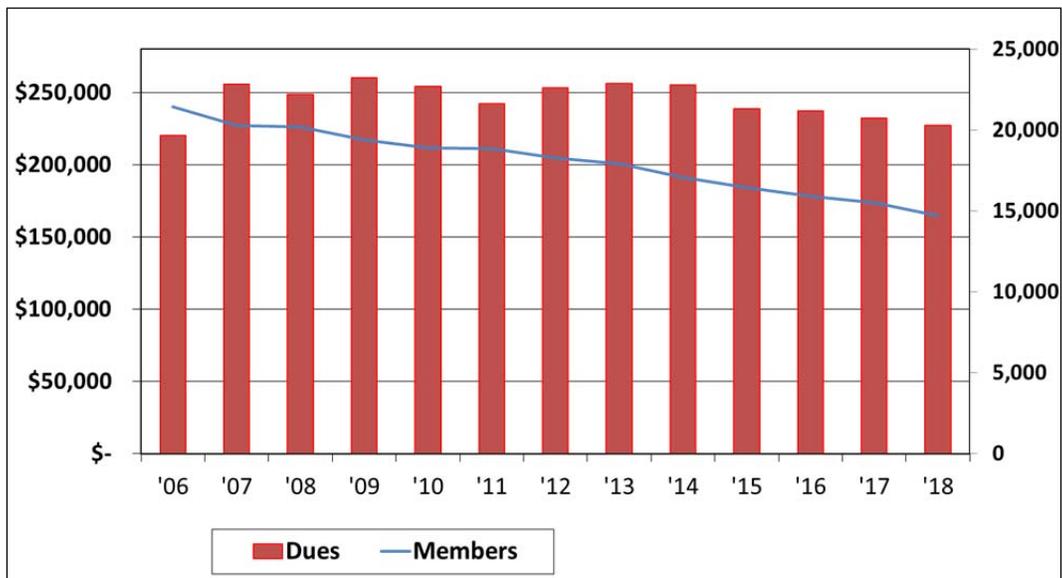


Figure 3

<sup>3</sup> Refer to **Figure 2's** "Poly (COLA % (+/-))" line. The "Poly" line smooths the yearly raw COLA data (blue bars) to show trends in the ups and downs of the COLA.